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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 803 DELEGATION

If my people, which are called by My Name, shall humble themselves, and pray...

May 29, 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

On April 16, 2024, Governor Lee signed HJR803 into law. This House Joint Resolution calls those who are physically able and spiritually inclined to do so to join in a 30-day season of prayer and intermittent fasting for the month of July as a means of humbling ourselves to receive God's grace, mercy, and blessing in Tennessee and in our Nation. This document embodies a bipartisan recognition that the issues we are facing cannot be effectively addressed without the intervention and favor of our Lord.

We are respectfully inviting you to join with us in leading the people of God across Tennessee into a time of humbling ourselves, praying, seeking God's Face, and repentance during July. Let us model for those who are not called by His Name a better way to bring about the positive changes we so desperately need. How do we do this?

- On Sunday, June 30, read or have HJR803 read in our church services
- Examine our lives in light of God's Word and confess of our sins
- Acknowledge that we, as the Church, have failed to stand for the principles of God, ask for His Forgiveness and Mercy, and commit to stand firmly on those principles going forward
- For those who are able, join in prayer and intermittent fasting as a means of demonstrating our desire for repentance

On July 1, we plan to begin a journey to all 95 counties in Tennessee, visiting courthouses and places of worship in order to read the Resolution, profess the need for repentance, and join in prayer together. We are convinced that this Resolution must be more than a legislative act and piece of paper. If you would be willing to host one of these county visits or just help us get the word out, send an email to one of the addresses at the top of the page or call Monty on his cell (865) 617 – 7459.

In humble sincerity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark A. Pody".

Senator Mark Pody

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Monty Fritts".

Representative Monty Fritts

STATE OF TENNESSEE



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Joint Resolution No. 803

By Representatives Fritts, Raper, Love, Davis, Lamberth, Todd, McCalmon, Sherrell, Carringer, Hulsey, Slater, Grills, Capley, Barrett, Richey, White, Faison, Hill, Warner, Butler, Gary Hicks, Brock Martin, Zachary, Burkhart, Alexander, Boyd, Williams, Sparks, McKenzie and Senators Pody, Jackson, Bailey, Bowling, Crowe, Niceley, Rose, Reeves, Southerland, Stevens, Walley, Yager

A Resolution to seek God's hand of mercy healing on Tennessee.

Whereas, our State and Nation suffer from violence committed upon our citizens by our citizens; and

Whereas, our State and Nation suffer from violence committed upon our citizens by non-citizens; and

Whereas, acts of violent crime in our schools are unacceptable; and

Whereas, human trafficking is an unacceptable and violent evil in our State, enslaving lives and violating the core values of our Creator-endowed rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and

Whereas, drug addiction overwhelms our families, our government finances, our workforce productivity, as well as our healthcare and our law enforcement resources; and

Whereas, deadly fentanyl flows uncontrollably across our southern U.S. border resulting in the deaths of Tennesseans; and

Whereas, Driving Under the Influence, drunk driving, results in great pain and injury for Tennessee families; and

Whereas, we have approximately 9,000 children in need of foster care, indicating a brokenness in many Tennessee homes; and

Whereas, evidence of corruption in our federal government stands to impact every Tennessean; and

Whereas, our National and State Founders trusted in the omnipotent hand of Providence to guide and bless our land; and

Whereas, over decades, these leaders called our people to seek out the Creator's favor by issuing proclamations like the one from John Adams on April 15, 1799:

[This day] be observed throughout the United States of America as a day of solemn humiliation, fasting, and prayer; that the citizens on that day abstain, as far as may be, from their secular occupation, and devote the time to the sacred duties of religion, in public and in private; that they call to mind our numerous offenses against the most high God, confess them before Him with the sincerest penitence, implore his pardoning mercy, through the Great Mediator and Redeemer, for our past transgressions, and that through the grace of His Holy Spirit, we may be disposed and enabled to yield a more suitable obedience to his righteous requisitions in time to come; that He would interpose to arrest the progress of that impiety and licentiousness in principle and practice so offensive to Himself and so ruinous to mankind; that He would make us deeply sensible that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." [Proverbs 14:34]; and

Whereas, we hold that our Founders correctly acknowledged Truth in their words; and

Whereas, we hold that "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." (Psalm 127:1); now, therefore,

Be It Resolved BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that the period of July 1, 2024, through July 31, 2024, be recognized as a time of prayer and fasting in Tennessee.

Be It Further Resolved, that we recognize that God, as Creator and King of all Glory, has both the authority to judge and to bless nations or states.

Be It Further Resolved, that we, as public servants in the Tennessee General Assembly, seek God's Mercy upon our land and beseech Him to not withdraw His Hand of blessing from us.

Be It Further Resolved, that we recognize our sins and shortcomings before Him and humbly ask His Forgiveness.

Be It Further Resolved, that we ask the Lord Jesus to heal our land and remove the violence, human-trafficking, addiction, and corruption.

Be It Further Resolved, that we ask that the Holy Spirit fill our halls of government, our classrooms, our places of business, our churches, and our homes with peace, love, and joy.

Be It Further Resolved, that we call upon all those who are physically able and spiritually inclined to do so to join in a thirty-day season of prayer and intermittent fasting as we begin a new fiscal year as a means of seeking God's blessing and humbling ourselves to receive His Grace and Mercy, transforming ourselves, our communities, our State, and our Nation.

ADOPTED: April 10, 2024



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEAKER OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR

REPRESENTATIVE MONTY FRITTS

Thoughts and Scripture on preparing for Repentance from Missionary to the Tennessee General Assembly – Rev. Bill Geisel

In the Bible, there are 10 days from the Feast of Trumpets until the Day of Atonement when God judged the sin of His people. It became a time of deep introspection, **repentance**, and prayer. They are called the 10 Days of Awe. However, before that time is thirty days of preparation, a month called *Elul*, and it means *searching*. That is a lot of soul searching, but it reminds us that **repentance** is not a small thing in God's eyes, and it is appropriate to spend ourselves in this sober, spiritual discipline.

Preparing our hearts for **repentance** requires letting the light of God's Word and Spirit to search us from within. It begins the process of shaping us to desire to come into harmony with God's plan and purposes for our lives and this world.

"Let us search and try our ways, And return to the LORD. Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens." Lamentations 3:40-41 KJV

"Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my mind and my heart." Ps 26:2 NKJV

Repentance is a gift God gives *as we work with Him* to seek the broken places that need spiritual healing. It is hard work that often goes undone because we too easily say words in our corporate prayers that have not come from prepared hearts. **Repentance** takes time and honesty in the inward parts of our being.

"Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up." James 4:8-10 KJV

"...if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." 2 Timothy 2:25b, 26 KJV

In ancient times, God's people were often aroused to congregate, to fight, and called to prayer and **repentance** by the eerie sound of the shofar, the trumpet of the ram's horn. It expressed an urgency and a non-typical challenge to an awareness of a need. It is easy to fall asleep at the wheel of life. **Repentance** is a call to wake up to the greater issues of God's Kingdom and our lives.

"And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake our of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed." Romans 13:11 NKJV

"Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light." Ephesians 5:14

God is a God of justice and judgement, but all through the Scriptures He implicitly expresses His divine mercy precedes judgement. He is eager to forgive and restore! This is the invitation to **repentance** that He extends, and which should draw us to Him in **repentance**. While these verses are for Israel, they express the nature of our God, the kind of God who hears, forgives, and restores!

"I, even I, am He who comforts you. Who are you that you should be afraid of a man who will die, and of the son of a man who will be made like grass? And you forget the LORD your Maker, who stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth...Your watchmen shall lift up their voices, with their voices they shall sing together; for they shall see eye to eye when the LORD brings back Zion...The LORD has made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." Isaiah 51:12-13; 52:8,10 NKJV

"Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." Psalm 24:3-5

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9 NKJV

Our sins can be forgiven in an instant, but the mark of true repentance is a change in our nature which expresses itself in a change of action and behavior. When we cry out for a season of prayer, fasting and repentance in our State, we are committing ourselves to letting God seek out in our own lives first and then those of the people of our State, ways in which His character is not being demonstrated.

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit." Psalm 32:1-2 NKJV

"But seek ye first, the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6:33

If God grants true repentance to us and to the people of our State, it will look like something. It will look like greater love for God, and greater love toward others in the cities and the counties, in urban areas and rural areas. Strife will diminish and mercy increase, and justice prevail. In our prayer, repentance and fasting, we should anticipate seeing God bring that change to us and to desire it for His glory. That is what holiness looks like on the ground, not just happiness in church on Sunday.

"Happy is the one who cares for the poor; the LORD will save him in a day of adversity. The LORD will keep him and preserve him; he will be blessed in the land." Psalm 41:1-2b HCSB

“By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in Him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.” 1 John 3:16-18 NKJV

“Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and turn away from evil.” Proverbs 3:7

“The one who desires life, to love and see good days, must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit. He must turn away from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous, and His ears attend to their prayer, but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.” 1 Peter 3:10-12

A final thought: It is a high and holy calling to lead others in repentance. It is also personally risky, for we must be prepared to do “the first works” of humility and returning to God in ways that only He alone might know. Are we truly ready for that? As J Wilbur Chapman, the human agent of the Second Great Awakening once shared, “We must be willing to pray to be made willing.” May God help us all.